REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. In Claim 1, the phrase to which the Examiner has objected has been deleted.

Claims 2-5 have been amended to depend from Claim 1.

Claims 1-2 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,771,668 to Fukunaga et al.

Claim 1, the only independent claim, has been amended to recite:

> "configuration means that enable the generation of asynchronous transmission requests without waiting for an isochronous data transfer and a sub-action gap after occurrence of a local cycle sync event in order to support a no cycle master transfer mode, if the means for checking finds that no cycle master exists in the network."

This feature is supported in the original description on page 11, lines 24-29. In addition, it is referred to on page 10, lines 22-24, and in Figures 4 and 5.

Fukunaga et al. describes a device in which it is determined whether a cycle master exists in the network or not. If it is determined that no cycle master is present, the device enters a transfer mode in which the data is transferred in an asynchronous data transfer mode. Figure 26 of Fukunaga et al. shows the standard asynchronous data transfer mode in which a sub-action gap (long gap) must be observed before a transaction request can be made.

In the instant invention, as defined by Claim 1 as amended, when no cycle master is found in the network, the new asynchronous transfer mode is characterized by an elimination of the sub-action long gaps in order to be able to transfer more asynchronous data packets and to better utilize the available bandwidth. It is therefore clear that Fukunaga et al. does not affect the patentability of Claim 1, as amended.

Claims 2-5 have been amended to correct their dependency, and have been amended to correct some minor errors, as needed. Since Claims 2-5 are dependent from Claim 1, and add further advantageous features, the Applicants submit that Claims 2-5 are patentable as their parent Claim 1.

Claims 3 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as being unpatentable over Fukunaga et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,683,848 to Parrish. Parrish relates to a fault protection arrangement for a telecommunications device in which a framing error, or other loss of synchronization in a backplane environment, is automatically identified and handled to prevent a single point of failure from propagating through the system. Nowhere does Parrish teach or suggest a detection means for a cycle master signal, as stated by the Examiner. Rather, Parrish merely detects a loss of synchronization signal. Furthermore, nowhere does Parrish teach or suggest the configuration means recited in Claim 1, as amended.

It is therefore clear that there is no suggestion in Parrish which could be used to modify the apparatus of Fukunaga et al. to obtain the apparatus defined by Claim 1, as amended.

Attached is a Petition for a Two-Month Extension of the period for response to the open office action. The applicants submit that this response is therefore timely.

The applicants submit that this application is now in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

Please charge the $450 fee for the two-month extension, and any other costs that may be associated with the filing of this response, to Deposit Account No. 07-0832.

Respectfully submitted,
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